

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

B-
Survey No. 4710

1. Name

Historic 915-959 North Chapel Street
and / common

2. Location

street & number 915-959 North Chapel Street
city, town Baltimore
state & zip code Maryland 21205 county

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name
street & number telephone
city, town state & zip code

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Land Records liber
street & number Clarence Mitchell Courthouse folio
city, town Baltimore State Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title
date federal state county local
depository for survey records
city, town state & zip code

7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent
☐ good
☒ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check One

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check One

☒ original site
☐ moved:
date of move: _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This row of twenty-three (originally twenty-four) two-story, two-bay wide houses late Italianate-style brick houses with shed roofs and wooden scroll-sawn bracketed cornices were built in 1888 by Louis B. Bernei, a local investor in working class housing in East Baltimore. Some of the houses retain their original brick facades, which have been painted, and evidence remains that their basements were originally painted white, to imitate the marble used in more expensive houses. Other houses in the row have been either stuccoed or covered with formstone.

The houses are two stories in height, only 12' wide (14' for one end house), and occupy lots 60' deep. Each house is three small rooms deep and there is no backbuilding. The houses are constructed in running bond and were originally painted. The basement area was painted white, to imitate marble, as was common in houses of this type. Each house has a single hooded chimney located at the rear corner of the house. The shed roofs are capped by a continuous wooden cornice consisting of a crown molding supported by three long scroll-sawn brackets decorated with grooves and wooden turnings, connected by a lower molding strip, and ending with a distinct trefoil pattern. The frieze panel, which also serves as ventilation for the attic, is decorated with a butterfly-like pattern, created with a jig saw. Below the frieze panel there is a band of quarter-round molding set above a cut-work bottom band.

The tall, narrow window and door openings have flat wood lintels and sills. Some original 2/2 sash survive, but the majority of windows are 1/1 replacements. Doorways have a single light transom and show a variety of replacement door types. The houses sit on low basements, lit by a single-light sash. Each house is reached by two or three concrete or brick steps.

8. Significance

Period	Area of significance	check one & justify			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theatre	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other: specify	

Specific dates 1888

Builder/Architect Louis B. Bernei

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

These houses in the 900 block of North Chapel Street are particularly significant as being at the center of the Bohemian immigrant community in Baltimore in the 1880s and 1890s.

This group of houses is significant in that it represents the level of architectural stylishness achieved by many builders of small street houses in the late nineteenth century. The houses were built by Louis Bernei, a investor, according to a pattern that was quite common to the city's working class neighborhoods of the period c. 1880 to 1910. Recognizing that workers held different levels of jobs (and pay), builders created a hierarchy of house sizes (and prices) in the new neighborhoods going up to serve the expanding factory districts ringing the harbor and northeast of the central city. Builders acquired anywhere from an eighth to a half of a city block and built 14' to 15'-wide two-story houses on the main streets, and smaller, 11' to 13'-wide two-story houses on the narrower streets bisecting the blocks. Typically, in this period, main street houses might sell for \$1,200 - \$1,500; small street houses for \$700 - \$900.

In this particular case Louis Bernei also built the two story houses on the west side of Washington St. and the north side of Ashland Ave. He sold houses on all three streets to a mix of investors and owner-occupants, most of whom were recent Bohemian immigrants. The northernmost of the houses on the east side of North Chapel Street served as a combination residence/storefront, being operated as a local saloon by Matey (Matthew) Zacek. Most other owner-occupants followed the trade of tailor (very common in the Bohemian community) with the addition of two bricklayers and a produce salesman at the Broadway Market. Buyers received mortgages from the several Bohemian community building and loans—the Bohemian Permanent Building and Savings Association, "Slovanstro"; the St. Wenceslaus Building Association, and the Bohemian Workingman's Building Association.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Mary Ellen Hayward and Charles Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*
(New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999)

10. Geographic Data

Acreage of nominated property

Quadrangle name

Verbal boundary description and justification

11. Form Prepared by

name / title Dr. Mary Ellen Hayward

Organization The Alley House Project

date June 2000

street & number 1306 Carrollton Ave.

telephone

city, town Baltimore

state & zip code Maryland 21204

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

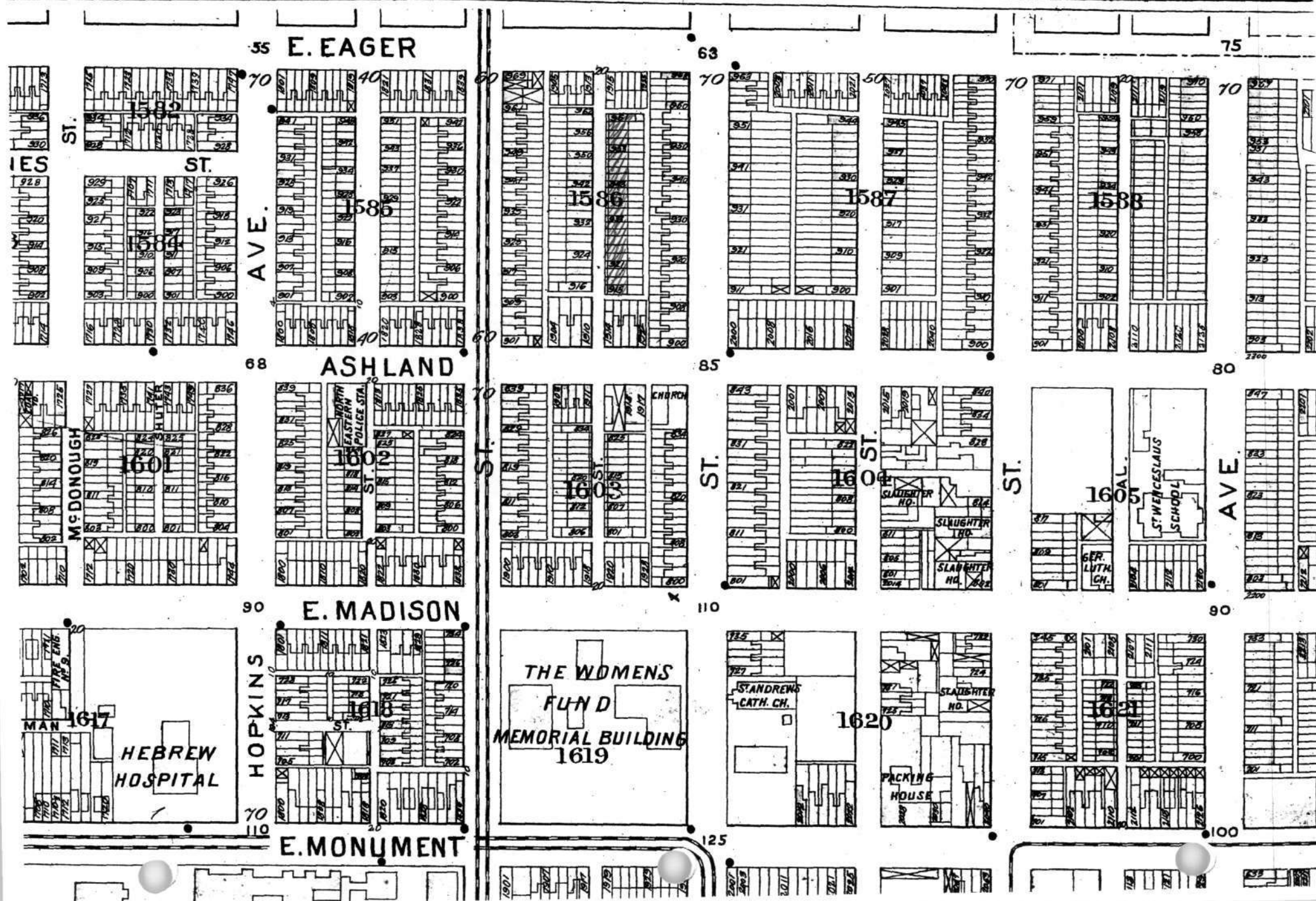
The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of property rights.

Return to:
DHCP/DHCD
Maryland Historical Trust
100 Community Place
Crownsville MD 21032-2023

B-4710

915-959 N Chapel St

BALTO. MD



B-4710
915-959 N. Chapel Street
Block 1586, Lots 116-138
Baltimore City
Baltimore East Quad.

Demolished





900 bln Chapel ES
ES W 74

3- 4710

915-959 N. Chapel St

3A170 . M)

W. Nield

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935 Chapel

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B-4710

935 N. Chapel St.

BALTO MD

W. Field

6 '96

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